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ABSTRACT

The University of Illinois Undergraduate Library offers a unique bibliographic instruction (BI) program for students enrolled in freshman rhetoric, English, or English as a second language courses. It consists of 11 different programs and 10 distinct components, each specially developed for a distinct student group. Although each BI program is different, all 11 are based on the principles that information is formally structured according to subject hierarchies, the student body is heterogeneous, and instruction is most effectively presented at the student's time of need (i.e., course-integrated). A six-point taxonomy of information skills listed in ascending order of cognitive demand or research sophistication, from physical orientation to understanding the idiosyncracies of access tools and materials within specific disciplines, has also been designed to guide the development of the program. A description of a specific program offered for the basic writer, Pre-Research Skills Instruction (PRSI), provides an example of a controlled research exercise designed by librarians and writing instructors to provide basic writers with a successful initial research experience. Appendices include "Keystones of Bibliographic Information: Hierarchical Structure of Information"; a listing of PRSI research topics; a PRSI subject bibliography; a bibliographic instruction checklist for the classroom teacher; and a seven-item bibliography of material related to librarian-English instructor cooperation. (KM)

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INFORMATION LITERACY, THE LIBRARY AND THE BASIC READER/WRITER

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Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Conference on College Composition and Communication (38th, Atlanta, GA, March 19-21, 1987)

Don Cruickshank and Susan Sullivan-Tuncan have presented how the English and English as a Second Language departments at the University of Illinois approach the basic writer. I would like to now give you the Undergraduate Library's approach to basic writers by describing the unique award-winning bibliographic instruction program developed for these students.

During the past ten to fifteen years, there has been an increased emphasis in college and university libraries on educating students in the bibliographic or research skills necessary to become independent and effective researchers. In librarianship, the teaching of these necessary skills is called bibliographic instruction or B.I. Most college and university libraries offer some type of B.I. to incoming students, usually designed for what I will call the generic student. To my knowledge, the University of Illinois Undergraduate Library is one of the few which offers unique B.I. programs designed for differentiated student groups. As recently as 1980, the B.I. program was monolithic, designed clearly with the generic student in mind, the one-size-fits-all approach to bibliographic instruction. All 6,500 incoming students were offered:

1) a tour (50 minute orientation to the physical layout, collection & services, led by a librarian)

2) Research Skills Instruction (a 50 minute presentation on doing research at UIUC)

3) Term Paper Research Counseling (free one-to-one counseling by volunteers from the library).

Approximately 1000 students went on the tour, 95 attended a Research Skills Instruction session and 800 used the Term Paper Research Counseling service.

As you can well imagine, presenting the same program to the advanced engineering freshman from a suburban Chicago high school as to the non-native

speaker, newly arrived in the U.S., as to the basic writer from an inner city school with a library consisting of one bookcase was not a smashing success. Perhaps it was the basic writer who individually demanded 22 hours of a librarian's time one semester to get him through compiling his sources for a paper on the merits of legalizing prostitution, or the writing instructors frustrated by uninspired research papers (complete with inadvertant plagarism), or the repeated questions at the reference desk which were supposedly answered in our BSI sessions that prompted a restructuring of the B.I. program. With the help of an Undergraduate Instructional Award in 1982 and a very close working partnerhip with the English and ESL departments, we designed a complex B.I. program which consists of 11 different programs and 10 distinct components, each specially developed for a distinct student group.

While each B.I. program is different, all 11 are based on 3 principles: first, that information is formally structured according to subject hierarchies (that is, that there is a rational structure to information, and that teaching this to the student is accomplished through the presentation of a 3 question cognitive strategy); second, that the student body is heterogeneous, not comprised of 6500 generic students; and third, that instruction is most effectively presented at the student's time of need (in other words, it is course-integrated). Additionally, we developed a taxonomy of information skills to guide the development of the program. The six-point taxonomy lists skills in ascending order of cognitive demand or research sophistication, from physical orientation to understanding the idiosyncracies of access tools and materials within specific disciplines. (See Appendix A for Keystones of Bibliographic Instruction.)

The B.I. programs are all designed so that on completion of the course which fulfills the freshman rhetoric requirement, all students will have a solid foundation in and working understanding of bibliographic research.

I would like to take the remainder of my presentation to describe specifically the program offered for the basic writer -- the student enrolled in Special Options Rhetoric 102, EOP 104 or ESL 114.

The unique bibliographic instruction component offered to basic writers is called Pre-Research Skills Instruction (or PRSI for short; librarians have an affinity for acronyms and also for handouts, as you will soon see).

The PRSI is a controlled research exercise designed by librarians and writing instructors to provide basic writers with a successful initial research experience. The PRSI addresses the first three skills in the taxonomy of information skills: 1) physical orientation to the library; 2) recognition of types of materials (encyclopedia vs. periodical article vs. book); and 3) understanding of the internal hierarchical structure of materials (use of printed indexes and structure of encyclopedia articles, for example).

The PRSI takes place the last 4 weeks of the semester and is the final assignment for the course. The writing instructors schedule to bring their classes to the library instruction room in lieu of regularly scheduled classes. Before the session, the writing instructor distributes a list of 16 pre-determined PRSI topics (See Appendix B for topics). The topics have been developed by librarians in consultation with the writing instructors. Each student selects one topic; no more than 2 students may work on a topic in order to limit the competition for materials.

When the students and instructor come to the UGL instruction room, they are greeted by one of the Undergraduate librarians. The room is divided into four work stations, each of which contains materials that address a general topic. Last fall the 4 topics were: animals, the media, computers and the world view. In the past, the general topics have included: sports, alcohol, immigration, nuclear energy and power. Each work station is further divided into four subtopics, each with a specific discipline focus. For instance, the computers work station looks at computers from 4 different perspectives:

1) criminal justice: that computer crime is becoming a serious problem

2) engineering: that robots will soon be providing most of our industrial labor

3) education: that schools must help students become computer literate

4) psychology: that computers have a profound impact on how individuals interact with one another.

(See Appendix C for bibliography.)

For each subtopic, a subject encyclopedia, several retrospective sources (books), and numerous contemporary sources (periodical articles of news reports) are provided for the students directly at the work station.

Let's take one of the computer topics as an illustration -- the education perspective: "Because computers have become an integral part of society, schools must help students become computer literate." Sources from the bibliography include:

1) Subject encyclopedia: Encyclopedia of Computer Science & Engineering

2) Retrospective: a book called Computers in the Classroom

3) Contemporary: an article called "Computers" in Education Digest.

The librarian gives the students a 15 minute introduction to what types of materials are on the tables and what their distinctive features

are. The librarian also tells the students that during the next semester when they write the research paper they will receive detailed instruction on how to find these types of materials themselves at UIUC.

The students then use the remaining time to read and take notes on the materials at the workstation which correspond to their chosen topic. Depending on the class, the students come back as a group from 1 to 5 times; students may also come back during evenings and weekends to use the materials.

The tangible product of the PRSI is a 3-4 page mini-research paper based on the materials available in the instruction room. Students have been able to work with a variety of materials and formats, concentrating on developing a cohesive argument, substantiated by authority. Through the PRSI experience, the students learn first hand:

1) that information is structured hierarchically by subject (which complements writing in the disciplines);

2) to recognize and discriminate between different types of materials;

3) to understand how materials are internally structured;

4) to synthesize several sources of information into one cohesive paper and to reconcile conflicting sources;

5) to credit sources appropriately;

6) and that they can be successful in research at the 3rd largest academic library in the country.

During the semester following the PRSI, librarians instruct students further in research skills through course-integrated research sessions, online catalog workshops, term paper research counseling, and programmed worksheets. Since the introduction of the PRSI in 1983, both librarians and writing instructors unanimously agree that the basic writers are much better prepared to handle the rigors of full-scale independent research demanded by the term paper in the second semester of the sequence.

The B.I. program we have developed for basic writers has served to significantly improve students' research skills. In an evaluation of term paper bibliographies prepared by basic writers and mainstreamed students, we found that basic writers matched and often exceeded the quality of mainstream bibliographies. Before the PRSI was introduced, bibliographies of basic writers' research papers paled in comparison to their mainstream counterparts. Our experience has been that if appropriate B.I. is given to basic writers, the students will catch up and often overtake their mainstreamed classmates.

Finally, a B.I. program, no matter how well designed, will fail without the total cooperation of and joint development by librarians and writing instructors. Neiter librarians nor writing instructors can work in an educational vacuum. The work each of us does in our individual domains of writing and research is directed at the same goal: educating the basic writer. We need to seek each other out and share our respective expertise. For those of you who are interested in establishing or restructuring a B.I. program at your institution, the next handout is a checklist of strategies for instructors in approaching the library concerning program development. (See Appendix D for checklist.) Also, I'm passing around a list of vital readings which address cooperation between the librarian and the writing instructor. (See Appendix E for list.)

It has been our experience that the close cooperation of librarians, writing instructors and student services personnel results in course and program innovations which directly improve and enhance the education of the basic writer.

Appendix A

KEYSTONES OF BIBLIOGRAPHIC INSTRUCTION:

Hierarchical Structure of Information

1. Three-Step Research Strategy
2. Informal Taxonomy of Library Skills
3. Educational Objectives

Three-Step Research Strategy

Developed by Lori Arp and Betsy Wilson

Step 1: What subject is involved?

Completing the first step--what subject is involved, or what discipline or part of the classification of information is involved--enables the researcher to recognize and use the hierarchical nature of the structuring of information.

Step 2: What kind of information is needed?

A. Single Fact Information?

The researcher is directed to a reference librarian for single fact information because of the idiosyncratic nature of this type of information.

B. General Information?

The researcher is directed to subject and general encyclopedias, dictionaries, handbooks, and introductory books which are generally located in the reference area of a library.

C. In-Depth Information?

The researcher is directed to third step of the research strategy.

Step 3: What is the time-frame of the materials needed?

A. Retrospective?

Retrospective materials are published or produced some

time after an event occurs and are most commonly manifested as books.

Depending on the institution and bibliographic control systems, the researcher may be directed to card catalogs, online catalogs, appropriate commercial data bases, and bibliographies.

B. Contemporary?

Contemporary materials are published close to an event's occurrence, most typically as periodical articles.

Once again, depending on the institution and the specific access tools available, the researcher may be directed to periodical indexes and abstracts, appropriate data bases, and bibliographies.

C. Combination of Retrospective and Contemporary Materials?

In this case, the researcher would appropriately use methods for identifying contemporary and retrospective materials.

Informal Taxonomy of Library Skills

Developed by Lori Arp and Betsy Wilson

The "Guidelines for Objectives" developed by the Association of College and Research Libraries Bibliographic Instruction Section provided a foundation for an informal taxonomy (or list of quantifiable skills) of library skills. The taxonomy is listed below with the skills listed in ascending order of cognitive demand and research sophistication:

1. orientation to the physical structure of the library
2. recognition of types of materials (e.g. encyclopedia, journal article)
3. understanding of the internal hierarchical structures of materials
4. understanding of the hierarchies within subject or academic disciplines
5. understanding of access tools and library operations in relation to subject disciplines
6. understanding of the idiosyncracies of the access tools and materials within a specific discipline.

Appendix B

PRE-RESEARCH SKILLS INSTRUCTION
Fall 1987

TOPIC: ANIMALS

Ethics: Because of the maltreatment of animals, live animal experimentation should be severely limited.

Psychology: Because pets can fill an emotional need, they can have a significant psychological impact on their owner's well-being.

Medicine: Given the present state of knowledge about heart trasplants, Baby Fae was merely a cheap attempt as sensationalism by the parents and doctors.

Economics: Because of the biological and research value of each species, the US government should make a concerted effort to save rare plants and animals.

TOPIC: THE MEDIA

Biography: Rupert Murdoch has had a negative journalistic impact on the newspapers he has purchased.

Political Science: The press in the Soviet Union is not an independent body, but a mouthpiece for the government.

Ethics: The US government is trying to control the content of our media through a veil of "national security".

Law: The Sharon and Westmoreland libel suits have brought a new standard of reporting documentation.

TOPIC: COMPUTERS

Criminal Justice: As our society becomes increasingly dependent on automated systems, computer crime is becoming a serious problem.

Engineering: Robots are becoming so advanced that they will soon be providing most of our industrial labor.

Education: Because computers have become an integral part of society, schools must help students become computer literate.

Psychology: Computers have a profound impact on how individuals interact with one another.

TOPIC: THE WORLD VIEW

Political Science: The US should use harsher sanctions against the repressive government of South Africa in order to end apartheid.

Management: To balance trade, the US government should work at strengthening trade relations with Japan instead of imposing trade restrictions.

Economics: Because the People's Republic of China is recognizing the advantages of capitalism, significant changes have been made recently in China's economy.

Appendix C

COMPUTERS: EDUCATION

THESIS: Because computers have become an integral part of society, schools must help students become computer literate.

GENERAL:	001.6403 En192 1983	ENCYCLOPEDIA OF COMPUTER SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING, pp.585-98, 225-6.
INDEPTH RETROSPECTIVE:	371.39445 C7395	COMPUTERS IN THE CLASSROOM p. 7 - 11.
	371.39445 c73912 1983	COMPUTERS AND EDUCATION, PP. 15-28.
	371.39445 C7393	COMPUTERS IN EDUCATION. pp. 11-18.
	303.4834 St68c	THE COMPUTER GENERATION, PP. 35-50.

CONTEMPORARY:

"Computer Literacy" VITAL SPEECHES 48: 506-12 June 1, 1982.

"Computers: The Transitional Generation" WORKING WOMAN 9: March 1984 pp 49-50.

"Computer Worship" SCIENCE 84 May 1984, pp. 40-46.

"Why We Need to View Computer Literacy Comprehensively" EDUCATION DIGEST 47: 19-21 March 1982.

"Computers" EDUCATION DIGEST 49: 61-62, November 1983.

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Appendix D

Bibliographic Instruction: A Checklist for the Classroom Teacher

This checklist is designed for the classroom teacher who wants to initiate the development of bibliographic or library instruction in cooperation with the college or university librarian.

Needs Assessment

1. What are the instructional needs of your students with respect to the library, information, and research?
2. Are course assignments library or research based? (i.e. research papers, documented essays)
3. Should you restructure or design any assignments to include library or research components?
4. What are your students' previous experiences with libraries and research?
5. Have your students received any library orientation or instruction?

Departmental Organization

1. Do you have your department's support and approval to initiate library instruction?
2. Are there other instructors who might also be interested in approaching the library for instruction?
3. Have other members of your department contacted the library concerning instruction?
4. Does your department have an established formal or informal relationship with the library?

Library Instruction and Orientation

1. Does the library already offer library instruction (also called bibliographic instruction) and/or orientation?
2. What type of instruction and orientation is offered?
   a. Tours (Group or Self Guided)?
   b. Formal Courses?
   c. Course-related Presentations?
   d. Course-integrated Instruction?

e. Term Paper Research Counseling or Term Paper Clinics?
f. Reference Service?
g. Other?

3. What type of curricular materials are available?
   a. Library Brochures?
   b. Instructional Handouts?
   c. A Research Guide?
   d. Computer-assisted Instruction Programs?
   e. Media Programs?

4. Are the existing instructional services and curricular materials sufficient or appropriate for your students' needs?

5. If the existing services are inappropriate or if no instruction exists, what type of instruction is appropriate for your students?

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Appendix E

BIBLIOGRAPHIC INSTRUCTION: A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

This bibliography is based on a portion of a bibliography originally compiled by Carolyn B. Fields for the Association of College and Research Libraries, Bibliographic Instruction Section, Education for Bibliographic Instruction Committee; additions and updates provided by Betsy Wilson, Undergraduate Library, University of Illinois, to accompany the panel "Library Skills Instruction and the Developmental Writer" presented at the 36th Conference on College Composition and Communication in Minneapolis on March 22, 1985. The following sources address cooperation between the librarian and the English instructor.

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